

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) An electrical connector for providing an electrical connection to an unstripped end of an insulated electrical cable having an outer sheath within which an insulated hot wire, an insulated neutral wire, and a ground wire are enclosed comprising:

- a) a body formed of an electrically insulating material, said body having a first body end and a second body end, said body having a cavity in said first body end sized to receive said unstripped end of insulated electrical cable;
- b) a lid having a first lid end and a second lid end, said second lid end pivotally connected to said second body end, said lid adapted to rotate around an axis of rotation between and open position and a closed position; and
- c) plural blade conductors attached to said lid comprising a hot blade conductor, a neutral blade conductor, and at least one ground blade conductor, said blade conductors each having a blade end comprising at least one downwardly depending blade and an outlet portion, said blades conductors being spaced apart and attached to the lid whereby when said lid is in open position said blades do not extend within said cavity and when said lid in a closed position said blades do extend within said cavity.

2. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein said cavity in said

body has a generally oval cross sectional configuration.

3. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 2, wherein said cavity in said body has a central ridge provided on a bottom portion of said cavity.

4. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein said cavity in said body has a generally rectangular cross sectional configuration with rounded corners.

5. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 4, wherein said cavity in said body has a central ridge provided a bottom portion of said cavity.

6. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said cavity in said body has a generally figure "8" shaped cross sectional configuration with a central ridge provided on a bottom portion of said cavity and a second central ridge on a top portion of said cavity.

7. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said cavity in said body has a generally "B" shaped cross sectional configuration with rounded corners with a central ridge provided on a bottom portion of said cavity and a generally flat surface on a top portion of said cavity.

8. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 7 wherein said cavity is adapted to receive an insulated electrical cable from one of a finite set of insulated electrical cable manufacturers which each produce cables of differing widths wherein the width of said cavity is equal to the width of the most narrow cable manufactured by said finite set of manufacturers whereby sides of the cavity provide at least some frictional resistance such that the cable fits snugly within said cavity.

9. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 8 wherein said cavity is adapted to receive an insulated electrical cable from one of a finite set of insulated electrical cable manufactures which each produce cables having a different volume of paper insulation whereby rounded portions of the cavity located on opposite side of said central ridge provide a sufficient volume of space to allow said unstripped end of insulated electrical cable from the manufacturer with the greatest volume of paper insulation to deform such that the cable fits snugly within said cavity.

10. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body has a top body surface, said top body surface having a hot blade opening, a neutral blade opening and at least one ground blade opening therein.

11. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 10 wherein said hot blade opening, said a neutral blade opening and said at least one ground blade opening each extend from said top body surface into said cavity.

12. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 10 wherein said hot blade opening, said neutral blade opening and said at least one ground blade opening are positioned to receive, respectively, the blade ends of said hot blade conductor, said neutral blade conductor and said at least one ground blade conductor.

13. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body has opposite side surfaces, said opposite side surfaces each having a textured gripping surface.

14. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 13 wherein said

textured gripping surfaces aid the user in gripping the connector during an insertion of an insulated electrical cable into the connector.

15. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 13 wherein said textured gripping surfaces aid the user in gripping the connector while moving the lid from said open to said closed position.

16. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said second body end has a central recess and a pair of ears on opposite sides of said central recess.

17. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 16 wherein each of said ears has a hinge opening along said an axis of rotation.

18. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body has at least one primary latch opening.

19. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body has at least one secondary latch opening.

20. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body has a pair of lock release tabs on opposite sides of said body to allow the electrical connector to be removably secured to compatible electrical devices.

21. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said body is fabricated from a lower body portion and an upper body portion which are permanently affixed together to form said body.

22. (original) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said lid is

asymmetrical in cross sectional configuration.

2322. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 22 wherein said lid has a least one opposite side wall surface portion which is formed at an angle not equal to 90 degrees relative to a top surface of said lid.

2423. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said lid includes at least one primary latch finger.

2524. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 23 24 wherein said at least one primary latch finger is adapted to be received by at least one primary latch opening in said body when said lid is moved from an open to a closed position.

2625. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 24 25 wherein said at least one primary latch finger secures said lid in a closed position.

2726. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 25 26 wherein said at least one primary latch finger is adapted to enter but not exit said at least one primary latch opening whereby once said lid is closed it is permanently secured in a closed position and can not be reopened.

2827. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 25 26 wherein said at least one primary latch finger has a lower inclined surface thereon which, as the lid is moved from an open to a closed position, urges said at least one primary latch finger inwardly toward a centerline of said at least one primary latch opening until said lower inclined surface reaches a primary recess in said at least one primary latch opening and wherein said at least one primary

latch finger has a latching ledge surface thereon, said latching ledge surface adapted to engage a locking surface within said at least one primary latch opening once said lower inclined surface reaches said primary recess.

2927. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 28 wherein said lower inclined surface and said latching ledge surface are in the form of a generally triangular tooth portion on a lower end of said at least one primary latch finger.

3028. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said lid includes at least one secondary latch finger.

3129. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 28 30 wherein said at least one secondary latch finger is adapted to be received by at least one secondary latch opening in said body when said lid is moved from an open to a partially closed position.

3230. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 29 31 wherein said at least one secondary latch finger secures said lid in a partially closed position.

3334. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 30 32 wherein said at least one secondary latch finger is adapted to enter but and exit said at least one secondary latch opening whereby once said lid is partially closed it is held in such partially closed position by friction but can be reopened to an open position by applying sufficient upward force to said lid.

3432. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 34 33 wherein said at least one secondary latch finger has a lower inclined surface thereon which, as the lid is moved

from an open to a partially closed position, urges said at least one secondary latch finger inwardly toward a centerline of said at least one secondary latch opening until said lower inclined surface reaches a secondary recess in said at least one secondary latch opening and wherein said at least one secondary latch finger also has an upper inclined surface thereon which, as the lid is moved from an partially closed to an open position, urges said at least one secondary latch finger inwardly toward a centerline of said at least one secondary latch opening allowing the lid to be moved to an open position.

3533. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 32 34 wherein said lower inclined surface and said upper inclined surface are in the form of a generally semi-circular protrusion on a lower end of said at least one secondary latch finger.

3634. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said lid further comprises a pair of spaced apart insulating plates which are positioned on opposite sides of an end of said ground conductor when said lid is in a closed position.

3735. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 34 36 whereby the possibility of arcing of electrical current between an end of said ground conductor and an end of one of said insulated hot wire and said insulated neutral wire is reduced by said insulating plates.

3836. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said second lid end is provided with at least three outlet openings to provide access from outside of said connector to said hot blade conductor, said neutral blade conductor, and said

at least one ground blade conductor.

3937. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said lid has at a hot blade conductor channel, a neutral blade conductor channel, and said at least one ground blade conductor channel on an inner surface thereof adapted to receive and position, respectively, hot blade conductor, said neutral blade conductor, and said at least one ground blade conductor.

4038. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said first end of said lid has a downwardly extending grip strain relief member adapted to grip against and securely hold said insulated electrical cable within said electrical connector when said lid is moved to a closed position.

4139. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said lid has a generally planar configuration on said first end and has a generally cylindrical lid portion provided on said second end, said cylindrical lid portion adapted to be attached for pivotal movement within a central recess in said body portion between a pair of ears provided on opposite sides of said central recess on said body.

4240. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said lid is formed from an upper lid member and a lower lid member between which said plural blade conductors are positioned and attached.

4344. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said blade portions of said hot blade conductor, said neutral blade conductor, and said

at least one ground blade conductor make electrical contact, respectively, with a hot conductor wire, a neutral conductor wire, and a ground conductor wire when said lid is moved from an open to a closed position with an unstripped end of an insulated electrical cable present in said cavity.

4442. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 41 43 wherein said at least one ground blade conductor includes a pair of spaced apart blade members wherein in a closed position a ground blade member is in electrical contact on opposite sides of a single ground conductor wire.

4543. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 42 44 wherein said pair of said ground blade members aid in securing and holding said ground conductor wire in a desired position within the electrical connector when said lid is in a closed position.

4644. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 42 44 wherein said pair of ground blade members are spaced apart a distance no greater than the diameter of said ground conductor wire.

4745. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 42 44 wherein said pair of ground blade members are spaced apart a distance slightly less than the diameter of said conductors and wherein said spaced apart blades exert inward force on opposite sides of said conductors.

4846. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 42 44 wherein when said lid is moved from an open position to a closed position, with an

unstripped end of insulated electrical cable present in the cavity, said ground blade members slice through the outer sheath of said electrical cable and move to a location where said ground blade members are in electrically contact with said ground conductor wire.

4947. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein when said lid is moved from an open position to a closed position, with an unstripped end of insulated electrical cable present in the cavity, said blade portions of said hot blade conductor and said neutral blade conductor, respectively, puncture through said outer sheath and puncture through the insulation of said hot conductor wire and said neutral conductor wire.

5048. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 47 49 wherein said hot wire conductor blade makes electrical contact with said hot conductor wire on a side of said hot wire most distant from said ground wire and said neutral wire conductor blade makes electrical contact with said neutral conductor wire on a side of said neutral wire most distant from said ground wire.

5149. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said at least one ground wire conductor blade is generally "L" shaped.

5250. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 49 51 wherein said at least one ground wire conductor blade is provided along a front edge and along a bottom edge of a generally rectangular insulating plate member.

5354. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1

wherein said at least one ground wire conductor blade has a bottom edge blade portion.

5452. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according ~~4~~¹ to claim 53 wherein said bottom edge blade portion slices the outer sheathing as the lid is moved from an open position to a closed position when an insulated cable is present in the cavity.

5553. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 wherein said at least one ground wire conductor blade has a front edge blade portion.

5654. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 55 ~~53~~ wherein said front edge blade portion has a central blade segment, said central blade segment deformed inwardly with respect to said front edge blade portion, said central blade segment has a leading edge, whereby when the lid is moved from an open position to a closed position with an insulated cable present in the cavity, said leading edge of said central blade segment cuts into a side portion of the ground conductor wire.

5755. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according ~~54~~ 56 wherein said central blade segment is deformed inwardly with respect to said front edge blade portion at an angle of approximately 17 degrees.

5856. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said a hot blade conductor and said a neutral blade conductor have blades having a forward edge which is curved along arc having a radius point located at an axis of rotation of said lid.

5957. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 1 wherein said a hot blade conductor and said a neutral blade conductor have blades having a sharp point on a

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lowermost end thereof.

6058. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 57 59 wherein each of said outlet portion of said conductor blade members is in the form of one of a male plug member and a female receptacle member.

6159. (currently amended) An electrical connector for insulated cable according to claim 1 further comprising a coupling device adapted to receive the second end of a pair of electrical connectors whereby a splice connecting two unstripped ends of insulated electrical cable having an outer sheath within which an insulated hot wire, an insulated neutral wire, and a ground wire are enclosed can be efficiently provided.

6260. (currently amended) An electrical connector according to claim 59 61 wherein said coupling device includes two open ends to receive an outlet portion of said electrical connectors and wherein said coupling device has three conducting blades to provide an electrical connection for one open end to an opposite open end thereof.